



State of Vermont

Department of Vermont Health Access

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****Important Changes to Sildenafil Coverage ****

April 9, 2019

Dear Provider,

On July 1, 2006 phosphodiesterase-5 (PDE-5) inhibitors became a non-covered benefit for all Vermont Pharmacy Programs for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED). The change was resultant from changes set into effect January 1, 2006 and as detailed in Section 1903 (i)(21)(K) of the Social Security Act, precluding Medicaid Federal Funding for outpatient drugs used for the treatment of sexual or erectile dysfunction. Sildenafil 20mg remained available for coverage via prior-authorization (PA) for the treatment of Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH). Due to low cost, however, the PA requirement was removed 1/1/17.

The Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Board is composed of practicing Vermont pharmacists and physicians who are responsible for reviewing and advising the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) about drug utilization for Vermont Medicaid enrollees. A recent retrospective drug utilization review focused on Vermont Medicaid enrollees taking sildenafil in calendar year 2016 and 2017. It revealed a dramatic increase in the use of sildenafil. Additionally, it revealed that a significant percentage of members taking Sildenafil after it became preferred in 2017 did not have a diagnosis of PAH. This suggests that it is being used to treat ED which Medicaid policy does not cover.

In response to these data findings, the DUR Board has recommended moving sildenafil back to a non-preferred status on the Preferred Drug List (PDL). **Effective 4/26/19**, Sildenafil will require prior authorization to verify a diagnosis of PAH. It will not be a covered benefit when used for any other indication or diagnosis.

We appreciate all you do to improve the health of Vermont Medicaid enrollees and welcome any questions or concerns you may have. The DVHA pharmacy team can be reached at ahs.dvhaph@vermont.gov.

Sincerely,

J. Scott Strenio, MD

Medical Director